

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Energy Resources Conservation
and Development Commission

DOCKET
09-AFC-9
DATE <u>MAR 15 2010</u>
RECD. <u>MAR 18 2010</u>

In the Matter of:

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION)
FOR THE RIDGECREST SOLAR)
POWER PROJECT)
_____)

DOCKET NO. 09-AFC-9

DATA REQUEST No. 2 BY
Basin and Range Watch

March 15, 2010

Laura Cunningham
Kevin Emmerich
Basin and Range Watch
PO Box 153,
Baker CA, 92309
Phone: 775-553-2806
atomicoadranch@netzero.net

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**Energy Resources Conservation
and Development Commission**

In the Matter of:

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION)
FOR THE RIDGECREST SOLAR)
POWER PROJECT)
_____)

DOCKET NO. 09-AFC-9

Nicole Tenenbaum
Senior Project Manager
1625 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 270
Berkeley, CA 94709-1161

**DATA REQUEST No. 2 BY
Basin and Range Watch**

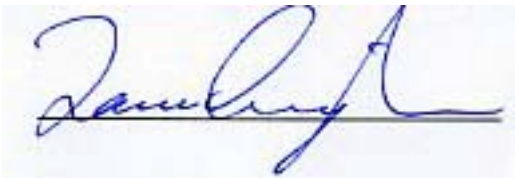
Dear Ms. Tenenbaum,

Basin and Range Watch submits this set of data requests on Visual Resources and socio-economics to the Solar Millennium Ridgecrest Solar Power Project, pursuant to Title 20, section 1716(b), of the California Code of Regulations. The requested information is necessary to: (1) more fully understand the project; (2) assess whether the project will be constructed and operated in compliance with all laws, ordinances, regulations and standards; (3) assess whether the project will result in significant environmental impacts; and (4) assess potential mitigation measures.

Basin and Range Watch reserves the right to submit additional data requests on any topic that requires further information. Pursuant to section 1716(f) of the Energy Commission's regulations, written responses to these requests are due within 30 days.

Please contact us if you have any questions. Thank you for your cooperation with these requests.

Sincerely,



_X_Check box if continuation pages are attached.

We would like to submit the following data requests concerning visual resources and socio-economics for the proposed Ridgecrest Solar Power Plant.

1. Night Lighting:

Please provide a Key Observation simulation of the night lighting from three different points.

The project site is a popular star gazing site for many individuals. Please provide an analysis of how the project will impede the activity of star gazing for astronomy groups.

Will dry cool towers be lit for aviation safety?

Would night time glare or glow from the project be visible from the community of Ridgecrest?

2. El Paso Mountains Wilderness Area:

How much of the project site will be visible from the El Paso Mountains Wilderness Area? Please provide a KOP from this wilderness area.

3. Appearance of “water” and reflective glare:

In section 5.15 in the Visual Resources section of the Application of Certification, the applicant states: “When viewed from an angle near the current direction of the sun, at a distance or an elevated position, the solar field at its most reflective will mirror the sky and may appear like a lake at hours of the day when the mirrors are oriented toward the viewer (e.g., looking from the south with the sun behind the viewer on a sunny afternoon); it will not produce significant glare.”

Please explain how the appearance a new rectangular “body of water” is not a visual impact in the more commonly dry Mojave Desert.

The following photograph shows the similar parabolic trough facility known as Nevada Solar One near Boulder City, Nevada during the reflective glare period on Highway 93.



Please explain how the applicant has determined that obtrusive reflections “will not produce significant glare”. This would seem almost unavoidable from many locations near the proposed project.

4. Conflicting Statements:

The applicant's certification report on visual resources states "The Project's effects on visual conditions during hours of darkness will be moderate to high." but later states: "a new source of substantial light and glare that would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area."

This report is very difficult to decipher when it contradicts itself many times. We would like to request a more thoughtful analysis be prepared to include more complete details of the concerns of local land owner's concerns, a better analysis of night lighting and a more objective view of visual resource classifications.

5. Class Three Visual Classification:

The project area is considered visually significant by several of the local residents of the Ridgecrest area. Please explain how the applicant has determined the area is only "Class Three" visual resource area.

6. Landowner Concerns:

How many of the private landowners who have properties near the site were interviewed for this analysis? What were their opinions?

7. Socio-economics:

We would also like to request that the applicant provide an objective analysis of how the project will impact the property values and quality of life for landowners who would be living adjacent to the project site.

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

We, Laura Cunningham and Kevin Emmerich, declare that on March 15, 2010, served and filed copies of the attached **data request by Basin and Range Watch**, dated March 15, 2010. The original document, filed with the Docket Unit, is accompanied by a copy of the most recent Proof of Service list, located on the web page for this project at: [http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solar_millennium_ridgecrest/Ridgecrest_POS.pdf]. The document has been sent to the other parties in this proceeding (as shown on the Proof of Service list) and to the Commission’s Docket Unit, in the following manner:

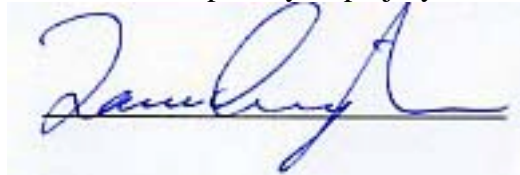
(Check all that Apply)
FOR SERVICE TO ALL OTHER PARTIES:

sent electronically to all email addresses on the Proof of Service list;
 by personal delivery or by depositing in the United States mail at with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed as provided on the Proof of Service list above to those addresses NOT marked “email preferred.”
AND

FOR FILING WITH THE ENERGY COMMISSION:
 sending an original paper copy and one electronic copy, mailed and emailed respectively, to the address below (preferred method);
OR
_____ depositing in the mail an original and 12 paper copies, as follows:

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION
Attn: Docket No. 09-AFC-9
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
docket@energy.state.ca.us

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.



Laura Cunningham, Kevin Emmerich

**BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
1516 NINTH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
1-800-822-6228 – WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV**

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION)
For the *RIDGECREST SOLAR*)
POWER PROJECT)
_____)**

**Docket No. 09-AFC-9
PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 2/23/2010)**

APPLICANT

Nicole Tenenbaum
Senior Project Manager
1625 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 270
Berkeley, CA 94709-1161
tenenbaum@solarcentury.com

Elizabeth Copley
AECOM Project Manager
2101 Webster Street, Suite 1900
Oakland, CA 94612
elizabeth.copley@aecom.com

Scott Galati
Galati/Blek, LLP
455 Capitol Mall, Suite 350
Sacramento, CA 95814
sgalati@gb-llp.com

Peter Weiner
Matthew Sanders
Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP
55 2nd Street, Suite 2400-3441
San Francisco, CA 94105
peterweiner@paulhastings.com
matthewsanders@paulhastings.com

INTERVENORS

California Unions for Reliable Energy
(CURE)
Tanya A. Gulesserian
Elizabeth Klebaner
Marc D. Joseph
Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo
601 Gateway Boulevard, Suite 1000
South San Francisco, CA 94080
tgulesserian@adamsbroadwell.com
eklebaner@adamsbroadwell.com

Desert Tortoise Council
Sidney Silliman
1225 Adriana Way

Upland, CA 91784
gssilliman@csupomona.edu

Basin and Range Watch
Laura Cunningham
Kevin Emmerich
P.O. Box 70
Beatty, NV 89003
bluerockiguana@hughes.net

Western Watersheds Project
Michael J. Connor, Ph.D.
California Director
P.O. Box 2364
Reseda, CA 91337-2364
mjconnor@westernwatersheds.org

INTERESTED AGENCIES

Janet Eubanks, Project Manager,
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District
22835 Calle San Juan de los Lagos
Moreno Valley, California 92553
Janet_Eubanks@ca.blm.gov

California ISO
e-recipient@caiso.com

ENERGY COMMISSION

JAMES D. BOYD
Vice Chair and Presiding Member
jboyd@energy.state.ca.us

ANTHONY EGGERT
Commissioner and Associate Member
aeggert@energy.state.ca.us

Kourtney Vaccaro
Hearing Officer
kvaccaro@energy.state.ca.us

Eric Solorio
Project Manager
esolorio@energy.state.ca.us

Tim Olson
Advisor to Commissioner Boyd
tolson@energy.state.ca.us

Jared Babula
Staff Counsel
jbabula@energy.state.ca.us

Jennifer Jennings
Public Adviser
publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us

